NUMB. CCCLXXIX.

The SPECTATOR.

Scire tuum nihil eſt niſi te ſcire hoc ſciat alter. Perſ.

Thurſday, May 15. 1712.

I have often wonder'd at that Ill-natur'd Poſition which has been ſometimes maintained in the Schools, and is compriſed in an old *Latin* Verſe, namely, that *A Man's Knowledge is worth nothing, if he communicates what he knows to any one elſe.* There is certainly no more ſenſible Pleaſure to a Good-natured Man, than if he can by any means gratifie or inform the Mind of another. I might add, that this Virtue naturally carries its own Reward along with it, ſince it is almoſt impoſſible it ſhould be exerciſed without the Improvement of the Perſon who practiſes it. The Reading of Books, and the daily Occurrences of Life, are continually furniſhing us with Matter for Thought and Reflection. It is extremely natural for us to deſire to dreſs ſuch our Thoughts put into the Dreſs of Words, without which indeed we can ſcarce have any clear and diſtinct Idea of them our-ſelves: When they are thus cloathed in Expreſſions, nothing but truly ſhews us whether they are Juſt or Falſe, as well as the Effects which they produce in the Minds of others.

I am apt to flatter my ſelf, that in the Courſe of theſe my Speculations, I have treated of ſeveral Subjects, and laid down many ſuch Rules for the Conduct of a Man's Life, which my Readers were either wholly ignorant of before, or which at leaſt thoſe few who were acquainted with them, looked upon as ſo many Secrets they had found out for the Conduct of themſelves, but were reſolved never to have made publick.

I am the more confirmed in this Opinion from what I having received ſeveral Letters, wherein I am cenſured for having proſtituted Learning to the Embraces of the Vulgar; and made her, as one of my Correſpondents phraſes it, a Common Strumpet; I am charged by another with laying open the *Arcana*, or Secrets of Prudence to the Eyes of every Reader.

The narrow Spirit, which appears in the Letters of theſe my Correſpondents, is the leſs ſurprizing, as it has ſhewn it ſelf in all Ages; there is ſtill extant an Epiſtle written by *Alexander* the Great, to his Tutor *Ariſtotle*, upon that Philoſopher's publiſhing ſome part of his Writings, in which the Prince complains of his having made known, to all the World, thoſe Secrets in Learning, which he had before communicated to him in private Lectures; concluding, *That he had rather excell the reſt of Mankind in Knowledge than in Power.*

Luiſa de Padilla, a Lady of great Learning, and Counteſs of *Aranda*, was in like manner angry with the Famous *Gratian*, upon his publiſhing his Treatiſe of the *Diſcreto*, wherein ſhe fancied that he had laid open thoſe Maxims to common Readers, which ought only to have been reſerved for the knowledge of the Great.

Theſe Objections are thought by many of ſo much weight, that they often defend the abovementioned Authors, by affirming they have affected ſuch an Obſcurity in their Stile and Manner of Writing, that, tho' every one may read their Works, there will be but very few who can comprehend their Meaning.

Perſius, the *Latin* Satiriſt, affected Obſcurity for another Reaſon, with which however Mr. *Cowley* is ſo offended, that writing to one of his Friends, You, ſays he, tell me, that you do not know whether *Perſius* be a good Poet or no, becauſe you cannot underſtand him, for which very Reaſon I affirm that he is not ſo.

However, this Art of *writing unintelligibly* has been very much Improved, and followed by ſeveral of the Moderns, who obſerving the general Inclination of Mankind to dive into a Secret, and the Reputation many have acquired by concealing their Meaning under obſcure Terms and Phraſes, reſolve, that they may be ſtill more abſtruſe, to write without any Meaning at all: This Art, as it is at preſent practiſed by many eminent Authors, conſiſts in throwing ſo many Words at a venture into different Periods, and leaving the Curious Reader to find out the Meaning of them.

The *Egyptians*, who made uſe of Hieroglyphicks to ſignifie ſeveral things, expreſſed a Man who confined his Knowledge and Diſcoveries altogether within himſelf, by the Figure of a Dark-Lanthorn cloſed on all ſides, which, tho' it was illuminated within,

within, afforded no manner of Light or Advantage to such as stood by it. For my own part, as I shall from time to time communicate to the Publick whatever Discoveries I happen to make, I should much rather be compared to an ordinary Lamp which consumes and wastes it self for the benefit of every Passenger.

I shall conclude this Paper with the Story of *Rosicrucias*'s Sepulcher. I suppose I need not inform my Readers that this Man was the Founder of the *Rosicrosian* Sect, and that his Disciples still pretend to new Discoveries, which they are never to Communicate to the rest of Mankind.

A certain Person having occasion to dig somewhat deep in the Ground where this Philosopher lay Interr'd, met with a small Door having a Wall on each side of it. His Curiosity, and the hopes of finding some hidden Treasure, soon prompted him to force open the Door. He was immediately surprized by a sudden blaze of Light, and discovered a very fair Vault: At the upper end of it was the Statue of a Man in Armour sitting by a Table, and leaning on his Left Arm. He held a Truncheon in his Right Hand, and had a Lamp burning before him. The Man had no sooner set one Foot within the Vault, than the Statue erecting it self from its leaning Posture, stood bolt upright; and upon the Fellow's advancing another Step, lifted up the Truncheon in its Right Hand. The Man still ventured a third Step, when the Statue with a furious Blow broke the Lamp in a thousand pieces, and left his Guest in a sudden Darkness.

Upon the Report of this Adventure the Country People soon came with Lights to the Sepulchre, and discovered that the Statue, which was made of Brass, was nothing more than a piece of Clock-work; that the Floor of the Vault was all loose, and underlaid with several Springs, which upon any Man's entring, naturally produced that which had happened.

Rosicrucias, say his Disciples, made use of this Method to shew the World that he had re-invented the ever burning Lamps of the Ancients, tho' he was resolved no one should reap any Advantage from the Discovery.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

At the Desire of several Ladies of Quality.

For the Benefit of Mr. Norris.

By Her Majesty's Company of Comedians,

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane, this present Thursday, the 15th Day of May, will be presented a Play call'd, The Spanish Fryar: Or, The Double Discovery. The Part of the Fryar by Mr. Estcourt, Lorenzo by Mr. Wilks, Gomez by Mr. Norris. To which will be added, A Farce of one Act only, called The Walking Statue: Or, the Devil in the Wine Cellar. With Dancing by Mrs. Bicknell, and others. By her Majesty's Command no Persons are to be admitted behind the Scenes. And to Morrow being Friday, will be presented, Duke, and no Duke. To which will be added, a short Comedy of two Acts only, call'd, the School-Boy. For the Benefit of Mr. Bowen.

AT the Queen's Theatre in the Hay-Market, on Saturday next, being the 17th of May, will be performed a new English Opera call'd Calypso and Telemachus. By Subscription. Tickets will be delivered out at the Office at the Theatre, where Attendance will be given all Friday in the Afternoon, and Saturday Morning.

An extraordinary Collection of Original Paintings by the most Eminent Masters, viz. Raphael, Titian, Correggio, Guido Reni, Carracci, Palma Andrea Schiavoni, Giacomo Bassan, Parmo del Vago, Vandyke, Elsthammer, &c. (being the entire Collection of Joseph Craig Esq; deceas'd) will be sold by Auction this Day the 15th of this Instant May, at his Late dwelling House in Craig Court near Charing Cross, where Catalogues may be had. The Pictures to be taken away in 3 Days after the Sale. N. B. The House is to be Let.

A Large Brick House, with a Tarrass and Back-door into St. James's Park, with good Vaults, and all other Offices under Ground, now in the Tenor of the Honourable Robert Benson, Esq; the last House in Queen-street, on the Right Hand, is to be sold. Inquire at Mr. Sayers, at the Golden Still in Pye Corner near Westminster.

For Sale by the Candle,

On Wednesday next, the 21st Instant, at Garraway's Coffee-house in Exchange Alley, precisely at 10 a-Clock in the Forenoon, (only one Hogshead in a Lot) 95 Hogsheads of new French Claretts, viz. Margaux, Orion, and other of the best Growths, deep Bright, strong and fresh, neat, and 100 one Hogshead sold out, Imported by Messieurs Tourton and Guiguer, by a Swedish Ship call'd Crown'd Mary, being the second and last Ship arrived from Bourdeaux directly, now lying in a Vault under the House of Sir William Humphrys's in Mincing-lane in Fenchurch street. To be seen and tasted on Monday and Tuesday next from 8 to 1, and from 2 to 6, and on Wednesday 'till the time of Sale. Note, The Buyers are desired to appear punctually at the Hour appointed, the Sale being to be continued without adjourning.

Next Week will be Publish'd, The Second Edition of

Creation. A Philosophical Poem. Demonstrating the Existence and Providence of a God. In Seven Books. By Sir Richard Blackmore, Knt. M. D. and Fellow of the College of Physicians in London. Printed for S. Buckley, at the Dolphin in Little Britain, and J. Tonson, at Shakespear's Head over against Catherine-street in the Strand.

Just Published, the Second Edition of

The Distrest Mother. A Tragedy. As it is Acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane. By her Majesty's Servants. Written by Mr. Phillips. Printed for S. Buckley at the Dolphin in Little Britain, and J. Tonson at Shakespear's Head over against Catherine street in the Strand.

Lately Publish'd,

A very neat Pocket Edition, Printed with an Elzever Letter, of Paradise Lost. a Poem, in twelve Books. Written by John Milton. Printed for Jacob Tonson at Shakespear's Head over against Catherine-street in the Strand

The Retir'd Gard'ner, or, Dialogues between a Gentleman and a Gard'ner: Containing the Methods of Making, Ordering and Improving a Fruit and Kitchin-Garden, together with the Manner of Planting and Cultivating Flowers, Plants, Shrubs and Under-Shrubs, necessary for the Adorning of Gardens, &c. To which is explain'd, the Art of Making and Disposing of Parterres, Arbours of Greens, Wood-Works, Arches, Columns, and other Pieces and Compartments usually found in the most Beautiful Gardens of Country-Seats. The whole enrich'd with Variety of Figures, being a Translation from the Sieur Louis Liger, to which is added, a Description and Plan of Count Tallard's Garden at Nottingham. The whole Revis'd, with several Alterations and Additions, which render it proper for our English Culture, by George London, and Henry Wise. Printed for Jacob Tonson at Shakespear's Head over-against Catherine-Street in the Strand.

The Works of Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. John Fletcher, in 7 Volls. 8vo. adorn'd with Cuts. Plutarch's Lives in 5 Volls. translated by several hands. Seneca's Morals translated by Sir Roger l' Estrange. The Satyrs of Decimus Junius Juvenal, &c. translated into English Verse by Mr. Dryden and several other eminent Hands. The Works of Mr. Congreve in 3 Volls. consisting of his Plays and Poems. Poems on several Occasions written by Mr. Prior. Paradise lost, a Poem, in 12 Books, by Mr. John Milton. The Christian Hero, written by Mr. Steele. N. B. The three last are printed with a neat Elzever Letter in small Pocket Volumes: All Printed for Jacob Tonson at Shakespear's head over-against Catherine-street in the Strand.

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